



Rookie of the Year

Phil Bildner

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Just when they think they've got the hang of things, Rip and Red find that fifth grade continues to challenge them in head-spinning ways. Tiki, a new girl whose Egyptian dad is an animal-rights activist, has just joined their class. She's charismatic, funny—and she's got game! Rip has his world turned upside down as Tiki proves to be tough competition on the Clifton United basketball team *and* leads a rebellion against the lousy new food service in the school cafeteria. Red—a kid on the autism spectrum—is struggling with the upheavals as well. But as these two funky and funny best friends discover, sometimes radical change is the right move, on the court and off.

Rookie of the Year Details

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Author : Phil Bildner

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From Reader Review Rookie of the Year for online ebook

Nicole Otting says

I liked so many things about this book!

The references to A Whole New Ballgame, the growth of the characters throughout the story and the sense of family that is built into Room 208 with Mr. Acevedo.

This book involved Rip being challenged in more way than one when a new student, Tiki joins them. She's great at basketball and does her own thing which typically involves interrupting people and making up her own words.

I hope there is more to come for these characters.

Students will enjoy this.

Jana says

I had the opportunity to read a digital ARC of this book from NetGalley in exchange for this review. I really enjoyed the first book in the Rip and Red series, so I was excited to get a chance to read the second book. Rookie of the Year did not disappoint, it was just as awesome as the first book.

This book picks up right where the first one left off. But, even though this is the continuation of a series, the book would be a fine stand-alone book for someone who hasn't read the first one. Bildner does a nice job of bringing readers up to speed on the characters, Mr. Acevedo's fifth grade classroom, and then moves the story forward smoothly.

There's a new student in the classroom, Tiki. Her family is from Egypt, and because her father has a job that requires him to move frequently, this is her fourteenth school. Rip has a rough time getting used to her outspoken style, especially when she becomes a starter on the school basketball team.

Rip is used to being the leader of the team, but when Tiki becomes the starter and Rip becomes a member of the "Bench Mob", there's a bit of tension. For readers who love sports, there is a lot of great basketball action. I know that I'll have several students who will love this book because of that.

The book, like the first one, has lots of great ideas for teachers as well. Lots of good book suggestions and project ideas. It would be so much fun to teach on a team with Mr. Acevedo!

Jason says

The Book was OK I would recommend it for shorter readers.

Ro Menendez says

The characters in this story are diverse in race, religion, cultural background, and abilities. BUT, the story is

not about their diversity which is what young readers need to see. Red seems to have autism, and Rip, his best friend, has learned to navigate triggers and knows how to soothe Red. Red gives as good as he gets, teaching Rip lessons on teamwork, kindness, and listening. Rip has some hard lessons to learn, because contrary to many teams where the best athletes get the most game time, Coach Acevedo values everyone on the team, believes everyone can contribute, and this collides with Rip's ego. Added to this is new girl Tiki, who is larger than life, and wants to be noticed immediately because as it has happened all her life, it won't be long before she leaves Reese Jones Elementary, she constantly moves because of her father's work. Tiki wants to win over Rip, but Rip just can't seem to find it in him to give her a chance. There are so many amazing conversations to be had through this book: tolerance, kindness, speaking your mind respectfully, finding a way to fight for your rights without breaking any rules, and much more!

Patrick says

The second story in the Rip and Red series. Comes out this summer. Loved it!

Artie says

Wow! This was another amazing book by Phil Bildner! I really like this book and I think that Tiki is a very interesting character. I also really like these books because it relates a lot to my life. The basketball games are just like the ones that I'm in!

Monica Hocking says

Another good book in series. Me no care for basketball, but love the interaction between friends and story that developes.

Katie says

This one took us a little while to get through. I read it with Isaac since it's one of the Hoosier Book Nominees on his list. It is the 2nd book in a series and I think we might have understood it a little better if we'd read the first one, but it was still okay. There is a lot of basketball lingo in it, so if you don't know much about basketball it might be a little boring or confusing to you. I think Isaac liked it okay, but if your child is a big basketball lover they will probably really enjoy this one. My 13 and 12 year old boys read it first and both loved it.

K.C says

This was a really cute sequel.

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC from Netgalley.com

Rip and Red are back after A Whole New Ballgame. They are still with Mr. Acevedo, who still has them doing a lot of reading and discussing of topics. When new student Takara (Tiki) Eid shows up, the class is thrown into turmoil. Tiki is very loud and outspoken, makes up lots of words, and has trouble taking her turn when speaking in class. She decides that the Lunch Bunch, the cafeteria ladies who used to work at the school but were replaced when a new food service took over, should be brought back, and that the sub par food must be fixed. She gets Avery really interested in the project, and installs a video camera on Avery's wheelchair. Rip knows that they are flaunting the school rules, but he has a lot going on. Tiki also shows up on his basketball team and is really good... and Rip gets put on the bench and used on the second team. Red is slowly improving his interactions with others, but he, too, has problems dealing with Tiki. When the group gets in trouble for the cafeteria incident, there are consequences that include Mr. Acevedo as well.

Strengths: Lots of basketball in this one, which I need desperately. I liked how the team was coed. Tiki was an interesting character, and the type of student I see from time to time, and seeing her backstory and how the other students interact with her is fun. This book managed to have a fresh take on school problems in a humorous and fast paced way. Very much appreciated.

Weakness: If anything, this is overly multicultural and almost felt forced. It probably just felt that way because I am in a rather homogeneous community.

What I really think: Definitely purchasing, and this will see a lot of use.

Jake Sidlosky says

I thought that this was a pretty good book. I like that it is about basketball and that it is exiting. I also like it because I can kind of relate to it because I play basketball also. I think a possible theme may be that your friends will always have you back. If you like basketball I think that you should definitely read this book.

Book Buying With Katie says

Loved many things about this--mostly the representation. Buuuuuut I don't like sports books. Sigh.

Barbara says

I'm torn between a 3 and a 4 for this book, but I certainly consider it a solid read aloud title for intermediate graders. Just as in the case of the first book in the series, much of the plot revolves around basketball, which will certainly add to its appeal for fans of that sport. But it's much more than a sports-driven title or series. It actually focuses a lot on character development and how some of the youngsters deal with adversity or things that don't go quite the way they had hoped. Fifth grader Rip is used to being the leader on the court, but when Tiki, a loquacious transfer student with mad ball skills, gives him a run for his money, he is unable to understand his coach's decision to start Tiki and reserve Rip for what comes to be called the Bench Mob but feels like the second string to Rip. Rip's initial annoyance with the girl morphs into resentment and jealousy when he sees how well she plays the game and how even his best friend, Red, who is on the autism spectrum, seems to like her. I really enjoyed how Red is usually the one who struggles with change, but in

this case, Rip does as well. Coach Acevedo continues to impress me as he works in innovative ways with his students both in the classroom and on the basketball court. I smiled as I read the description of the how the new cafeteria workers treat the students and how terrible the school lunches have become. Complemented with illustrations that fit the bill perfectly and portray the characters exactly how I imagined them, this book provides plenty of insight into fifth grade and several experiences with which readers will be familiar.

Jeff Raymond says

The continuing middle grade saga of a kid and his autistic best friend continues to be pretty charming and hit all the right notes along the way. A solid, wholesome series with a good message that doesn't beat the kids over the head.

Christina Hanson says

Zwibble! Another great novel in the Rip and Red series! Rookie of the Year by Phil Bildner brings back characters Rip, Red, and Mr. Acevedo in this sequel to A Whole New Ballgame. But add new girl, Tiki, to the mix, and Rip isn't having it. Tiki gets on Rip's nerves all the time: she's loud, interrupts others, and makes up fake words! Not to mention, she is joining the basketball team, and has skills that Rip has never seen from a girl before. Can Rip put aside his differences with Tiki for their team to win games? You'll have to find out when this book is released in July!
